UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Department of Health and Human Services

PACKAGE INSTRUCTIONS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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INTRODUCTION

One of the major issues affecting the quality of worklife today is violence. Until the 1990s, workplace violence was virtually unknown. Studies now show that violence at work is steadily increasing. Fear about violence among workers has also increased. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is not immune from these alarming trends.

To look at this issue in HHS, a working group was formed in 1995 by the Office of the Secretary, Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget, Office of Human Resources. Membership included representatives from almost every OPDIV, labor, security, the Employee Assistance Program, employee relations, safety, and others concerned about the health and well-being of HHS employees. The group (and a number of sub-committees) met regularly for more than a year. This package is the result of these efforts.

The HHS working group developed a comprehensive strategy for addressing violence at the HHS worksite. The strategy is general so that it can accommodate the various sites and programs within the Department. It is recognized that certain locations and operations in HHS have more unique and greater risk factors. These risk factors should be addressed in an expanded version of this package that will meet any special needs. Prevention was a key component of the strategy. Prevention efforts included the creation and distribution of a brochure for all employees and announcements on earning and leave statements. Ideas on prevention are also threaded throughout the written guidelines discussed below.

Another important aspect of the strategy was the development of written guidelines to assist OPDIVs and all employees in establishing workplace violence initiatives and in recognizing and responding to threatening situations. A number of focus groups were held to obtain employee feedback on the guidelines. There was strong support for the written guidelines in every focus group. Many changes were made as a result of the information gathered but the basic concept of written guidelines stayed intact. There were many suggestions to make an abridged version of the written guidelines that contained the very important information on recognizing and responding to violent or threatening situations. It was also recognized that a longer version was necessary for some people, particularly those more intimately involved with the issue, so a decision was made by the working group to provide both versions. They are included in this package.

One more critical element of a comprehensive workplace violence strategy is the establishment of crisis management teams that can help determine the seriousness of threatening situations, or to help respond to actual violent or traumatic events. It was determined that this type of activity is best handled at the local level since it requires the input of local violence experts and emergency response personnel. To assist with the selection, establishment, and operation of these teams, a brief set of guidelines was developed and is included with this package.

Finally, the working group and the focus groups strongly believed that training for all employees on recognizing and responding to workplace violence would be essential for any successful initiative. A model training curriculum was developed and is also included in this package. It contains a trainer's guide, a participant's manual, and a set of camera-ready overhead images. The curriculum includes basic information on recognizing and responding to workplace violence as well as case studies to apply the knowledge. It is intended for all audiences but has certain case studies for supervisors.

Each segment of the package will be described in more detail below. Following each description are any special instructions for photocopying or assembling the materials. The package contains a hard, camera-ready copy of each segment. In addition, each is contained in the set of diskettes.

YOU MAY NEED TO DO SOME EDITING BEFORE PRINTING FROM THE DISKETTES BECAUSE THE CODES IN YOUR LOCAL PRINTER MAY ALTER THE DOCUMENTS.

WRITTEN GUIDELINES

Purposes:
> •to educate employees on the nature of workplace violence
> •to educate employees on the roles, responsibilities, and policy considerations with regard to workplace violence
> •to educate employees on recognizing and responding to workplace violence
> •to provide ideas for prevention and other resources

Suggested Audience:
> •all employees of HHS but particularly those involved with the implementation and on-going operation of a workplace violence strategy
> •those involved in providing assistance to employees in threatening situations such as the Employee Assistance Program, employee relations, or security

Suggested Distribution:
> •employees involved in planning, establishing, and administering a workplace violence strategy
> •all human resources staff
> •those responsible for security and safety operations

•health unit
•on-site contract staff particularly security
•any others involved in assessing and responding to actual potentially violent situations (such as senior management and unions)

Assembly Instructions:
•This document can be photocopied directly from the camera-ready copy found in this package.
•The document is also available on the computer diskette found in this package. The document is in WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows.
•If changes are made to the diskette be sure the final page numbers in the Table of Contents are correct before printing.
•Chapter 4 contains (at the end) a policy letter signed by Secretary Shalala. This must be copied and inserted separately if using the diskette to print. The letter is NOT contained on the diskette.

WRITTEN GUIDELINES (ABRIDGED VERSION)

Purposes:
•to educate employees on the nature of workplace violence
•to briefly introduce employees to the roles and responsibilities related to workplace violence
•to educate employees on recognizing and responding to workplace violence
•to provide ideas for prevention

Suggested Audience:
•all employees of HHS

Suggested Distribution:
•all employees of HHS
•on-site contract staff particularly security

Assembly Instructions:
•This document can be photocopied directly from the camera-ready copy found in this package. Use standard 8.5 x 11 paper. Use 2-sided copying.
•The document is also available on the computer diskette found in this package. The document is in WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows.
•If changes are made to the diskette be sure the final page numbers are correct before printing.
•The end of this document contains a policy letter signed by Secretary Shalala. This must be copied and inserted separately if using the diskette to print. The letter is NOT contained on the diskette.
•If using the diskette for printing, choose booklet printing under printing options. Your printer will print half the document, then will instruct you to manually insert those pages for

the printing of the second half of the document. If your printer has the capability, choose duplex printing. If your printer does not have duplexing or does not allow you to manually insert paper, print with booklet printing then take the entire document and rotate every other page. Select duplex printing on your copier and copy the document. Finally, fold the document in half for booklet form. Again, the policy letter signed by Secretary Shalala is not contained on the diskette and must be inserted.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM GUIDELINES

Purposes:
- to provide guidelines for HHS decision makers in contemplating the establishment of crisis management teams locally
- to provide assistance on administrative matters for those actually establishing the teams
- to provide assistance with the on-going operations of the team

Suggested Audience:
- all persons involved in deciding on and establishing local crisis management teams
- all persons who are members of the on-going crisis management team

Suggested Distribution:
- same as above

Assembly Instructions:
- This document can be photocopied directly from the camera-ready copy found in this package.
- The document is also available on the computer diskette found in this package. The document is in WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows.
- If changes are made to the diskette be sure the final page numbers in the document are correct before printing.

TRAINING CURRICULUM

Purposes:
- to educate employees on the nature of workplace violence
- to educate employees on the roles, responsibilities, and policy considerations with regard to workplace violence
- to educate employees on recognizing and responding to workplace violence
- to provide ideas for prevention and other resources

Suggested Audience:
- all employees of HHS

Suggested Distribution:
- •training officers
- •those involved in making decisions about OPDIV and STAFFDIV-wide training
- •crisis management team members

Assembly Instructions:

The Trainer's Guide and the Participant's Manual require large amounts of disk space. You will probably need to edit them before printing from the diskettes because the codes in your local printer will alter the documents. Most of the editing should involve only margins and tabs.

- •The training curriculum is made up of three distinct documents: a Trainer's Guide, a Participant's Manual, and a set of overhead transparencies.
- •These documents can be photocopied directly from the camera-ready copy found in this package.
- •The documents are also available on the computer diskettes found in this package. The Participant's Manual is in Microsoft Word 6.0. The set of overheads is in Microsoft PowerPoint 4.0. The Trainer's Guide is in Microsoft Word 6.0 with Microsoft PowerPoint 4.0 slides inserted throughout the document.
- •If changes are made to the diskettes be sure the final page numbers in each document are correct before printing.
- •The Trainer's Guide is for use by those actually conducting the training. The Participant's Manual is the written material to be distributed to all who attend the training. The overheads are to be used by the trainer, if he or she decides to use an overhead projector. **The overheads must be copied onto transparent sheets before they can be used.**
- •If using the diskette for printing the Trainer's Guide and the Participant's Manual, be sure to select duplex printing on either your computer printer or your copier. **These documents have been created so that they require two-sided printing starting with page 1 (the document covers are not to be included).**